Chapter 30
Social Justice
History, Theory, and Research

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Social justice is a concept that originates in philosophical discourse but is widely used in both ordinary language and social science, often without being clearly defined. By synthesizing the common elements of various philosophical treatments (e.g., Elster, 1992; Feinberg, 1973; Frankena, 1962; Miller, 1999; Walzer, 1983), it is possible to define a general notion of social justice as a state of affairs (either actual or ideal) in which (a) benefits and burdens in society are distributed in accord with some allocation principle (or set of principles); (b) procedures, norms, and rules that govern political and other forms of decision making preserve the basic rights, liberties, and entitlements of individuals and groups; and (c) human beings (or perhaps other species) are treated with dignity and respect not only by authorities but also by other relevant social actors, including fellow citizens. The three aspects of our definition correspond, roughly, to distributive, procedural, and interactional justice, as we use the terms in this chapter. A theory of social justice need not address all three aspects, but it should address at least one of them. Conceived of in this way, social justice is a property of social systems—or perhaps a "paradigm of societies" (Frankena, 1962)—as suggested also by Rawls (1971) and Toynbee (1976). A just social system is to be contrasted with those systems that foster arbitrary or unnecessary suffering, exploitation, abuse, tyranny, oppression, prejudice, and discrimination. The foremost problem for scholars (or would-be practitioners) of social justice is that considerable disagreement persists, even after centuries of debate, concerning each of the elements incorporated in our definition (see Boucher & Kelly, 1998; Campbell, 2002; Miller, 1999; Solomon & Murphy, 2000). What is to be considered a truly fair principle for distributing benefits and burdens and why? Is equality, equality of, need, or some other principle of allocation? Similarly, what is a reasonable or appropriate set of rights, liberties, and entitlements? And what does it mean to treat others with dignity and respect? These are difficult questions, to be sure, but they are not in principle unanswerable. They have been addressed by some of the greatest minds in Western civilization, including Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Mill, and Rawls. In this chapter, we summarize the major scientific contributions of social psychology to the understanding and practice of social justice.

LEWINIAN TRADITION IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Social Justice as a Central Theoretical and Practical Concern of Social Psychology

It was not long ago that questions of social justice were at the forefront of theoretical and empirical inquiry in social psychology. The father of modern social psychology, Kurt Lewin, promoted the discipline as, among other things, a scientific means of fostering democratic egalitarian norms and preventing tyranny and oppression from gaining the upper hand in society. Although he seldom (if ever) couched these goals in the explicit language of social justice, it is clear that his "applied" research programs on overcoming certain forms of prejudice, group hostility, and self-hatred among Jews—to mention some of the most salient examples—reflected a commitment to social justice as well as a scathing critique of authoritarianism and the fascist ideology that had seized the hearts and minds of so many of his fellow citizens in 1930s Germany. Lewin self-consciously strove to integrate theoretical and applied goals, which he believed could be "accomplished in psychology, as it has been accomplished in physics, if the theorist does not look toward applied problems with high-brow aversion or with a fear of social problems" (Lewin, 1944/1951, p. 165). It is not surprising that one of Lewin's doctoral students, Morton Deutsch, went on to become one of the most illustrious contributors to the field of social justice research (see Deutsch, 1999).

Another prominent social psychologist of the postwar era, Gordon Allport, observed that, "Practical and humanitarian motives have always played an important part in the development of social psychology" (1962, p. 2). Specifically, he wrote that:

Social psychology began to flourish soon after the First World War. This event, followed by the spread of communism, by the great depression of the '30s, by the rise of Hitler, the assassination of the Fosse, race riots, the Second World War and its consequent anorexia, stimulated all branches of social science. A special challenge fell to social psychology. The question was not what is it possible to preserve the values of freedom and individual rights under conditions of mounting social strain and regimentation? Can science help provide an answer? (p. 4)

Allport's own work on The Nature of Prejudice (1954) as well as a predecessor, The Authoritarian Personality by Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford (1950), sought to employ theories and methods in social psychology to diagnose and ultimately defeat prejudice, intolerance, and other apparent obstacles to social justice. It has been suggested darkly on more than one occasion that the individual who exerted the strongest influence over the development of social psychology in the 20th century was Adolf Hitler (e.g., Cartwright, 1979; Jones, 1985/1998).

World War II illustrated far too vividly both the devastatory effects of social injustice and the human capacity to overcome it. In its aftermath, issues of social justice were central to social psychological theory and research. Textbooks routinely covered themes such as morality, social science, crime and punishment, prejudice, authoritarianism, propaganda, war and peace, and the determinants of revolution (e.g., Brown, 1965; Doob, 1952; Klineberg, 1940; Kroch & Kroch, 1939), and as was the case with Lewin's writings, such themes were often couched in terms of the absence of an explicit social justice framework, and terms such as "justice" and "fairness" were not necessarily used to illuminate them. As we shall see, it was not until decades later that social justice research became a subfield or area of specialization within social psychology. Before then, considerations of social justice seemed to permeate the field as a whole, albeit tacitly. None of the first three editions of The Handbook of Social Psychology contained a chapter devoted to studies of social justice per se (Miller, 2001, p. 528), but several chapters covered pertinent subjects, such as prejudice and ethnic relations, leadership, social structure, political behavior, international relations, collective action, and social movements.

Social psychological research on theories of justice (especially equity theory) began to flourish in the 1960s, but the demarcation of social justice research as a specific subfield came years later. For instance, Social Justice Research (a specialized interdisciplinary journal) was first published in 1987 under the editorship of Melvin Lerner,
The Justice Motive in Human Behavior

Solomon Asch (1959) suggested that social psychologists study not only the perpetuation of injustice but also “the vectors that make it possible for persons to think and work for others” (p. 372). More specifically, he wrote that: “It is of considerable consequence for any social psychology to establish the grounds of concern for the welfare of other persons and to develop the grounds of concern related to the concern individuals feel for their own welfare” (p. 368). Such comments presage research programs on “altruism” (Krebs & Miller, 1985), prosocial behavior (Batanov, 1998), and the so-called “justice motive,” that is, the extent to which people are motivated to promote fair treatment of others and not to harm others (Lerner, 1977, 1980, 2003; Miller, 1977; Montada, 2002; Tyler, 1994; see also Tyler & Smith, 1998). The point is not that justice and self-interest are always opposed—plainly, they are not. In fact, the sense of justice may originate in human and animal protective desires to insure that they receive what they “deserve” (Bronsman, 2006; Bronsman & DeWaal, 2003). When members of disadvantaged groups band together to push for civil rights or other improvements in their quality of life, they are fighting on behalf of social justice as well as personal and collective self-interest. (e.g., Piven & Cloward, 1978). Nevertheless, the purest evidence of a “justice motive” in human beings comes from cases in which people are willing to risk or sacrifice their own welfare to insure that others are treated fairly (e.g., Lerner, 2003; Monroe, 2004).

Rational Choice Theory and Its Discontents

Truly selfless behavior appears to violate both the normative and descriptive assumptions of rational choice theory, according to which individuals should (and at least sometimes do) act on the basis of self-interested preferences to maximize benefits and minimize costs (e.g., Becker, 1976; Kreps, 1990). It is generally assumed that in economic markets and other forms of social exchange, those preferences that lead to maximize individual welfare will predominate (e.g., Axelrod, 2006). As a result, rational self-interested behavior should be more readily observable than other forms of behavior that do not, on average, offer equivalent benefits. Some rational choice theorists have suggested that any genes that promote their own replication (at a significantly greater rate than they promote the replication of others’ genes) will not survive for long.

Crucially, however, the alleged “selfishness” of genes does not necessarily translate into selfishness at the level of individual (or collective) behavior (e.g., Crofop, 2000; Kreps, 2008). It is possible that prosocial behaviors that evolved primarily to ensure the survival of genetic relatives facilitate the helping of other, nonkin individuals (Park, Schaller, & Van Vugt, 2008). Models of cultural evolution, according to which some behavioral characteristics can be transmitted by social learning, can also explain the propagation of traits that are other-than self-regarding (Fein & Fischbacher, 2005). For these reasons a great deal of research has explored the question of whether behavior is inconsistent with fitness or survival (especially in the span of a single lifetime), regardless of whether it is at odds with economic perspectives on human rationality. Although it is beyond the scope of this chapter, empirical research suggests that evolutionary processes did produce justice-oriented behavior in marasmus, Capocin morr, and other human primates (see Bronsman, 2006; Bronsman & DeWaal, 2003; Burkart, Fehr, Eibl-Eibesfeldt, & Van Schaik, 2007).

The Altruism Debate

Quite apart from considerations of gene replication, social psychologists have debated the role of self-interest in supporting versus undermining prosocial behavior. The question, kicked around in many a dorm room over the years, is whether bona fide altruism really exists or whether helping behavior is always motivated by some form of egocentrism. Batson and Shaw (1991) characterize the dispute as follows:

*Advocates of universal egoism claim that everything we do, no matter how noble and beneficial to others, is really directed toward our own survival (or to some degree, unique circumstances), and the only genuine altruism is that motivated by such selfless goals.*

In support of the latter conclusion, Batson and colleagues have offered evidence in a large number of studies addressing the “empathy-altruism hypothesis” (e.g., Batson, 1990; Batson et al., 1991; Batson & Shaw, 1991). They suggest that witnessing the distress of others infuses empathetic emotions (such as compassion and tenderness) that facilitate perspective-taking and the setting of helping goals. Although helping behavior brings certain rewards, such as the reduction of guilt and other negative emotions—conclusion contradicts that the helper was motivated by altruism. Thus, Batson (1990) sought to determine whether the empathically aroused helper (a) benefits the other as an instrumental goal on the way to reaching some self-benefit as an ultimate goal (egoism) or (b) benefits the other as an ultimate goal, with any resulting self-benefits being unintended consequences (altruism) (p. 340). Although it is not possible to review the specific details of individual studies here, Batson and colleagues (1991) have made a reasonably strong case for the existence of altruistic motivation.

This is not to say that their position is bereft of detractors. Most notably, Claidini and his colleagues argued that altruistic behavior, even when triggered by empathetic emotions, is never truly selfless. Rather, they propose that the nonnormative good is an authenticity cue, and that it elicits other feelings, such as sadness (Claidini et al., 1987; Maner, Luce, Neuberg, Claidini, Brown, & Bargh, 2002; Schaller & Claidini, 1988) and perceptions of “oneness”

The Lewinian Tradition in Social Psychology

Lewin's (1912) social psychology was a forceful expression of the idea that human behavior is a function of the forces acting upon it. The Lewinian tradition in social psychology is characterized by the use of experimental methods to study the determinants of social behavior. This approach has been influential in the development of social psychology as a distinct field of study.
or “self-other overlap” (Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce, & Neuberg, 1997; Maner et al., 2002; Neuberg et al., 1997), and that these are capable of generating seemingly selfish behaviors. From the standpoint of social justice, it may not matter greatly whether the motivation to help others (and to sustain sacrifices in doing so) stems from purely altruistic desires or from the so-called “moral emotions” or processes of social identification. The important point is that human beings do appear to be capable of setting aside narrow self-interest to make the world a “better” (i.e., putatively more just) place. The specific nature of these justice-related concerns is the subject of the next section.

A TYPOLOGY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE CONCERNS

The earliest theory-driven research in sociology and psychology on the topic of social justice tackled questions of distributive fairness, especially considerations of “equity” and relative deprivation in the allocation of resources (e.g., Adorno, 1965; Croby, 1976; Lerner, 1974; Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978). Next came work on procedural justice, which addressed not only outcomes but the decision-making rules used to determine those outcomes (Folger, 1977; Leventhal, 1980; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Soon thereafter, a third type of justice was investigated: interpersonal (or intentional) justice—to incorporate concerns about informal as well as formal treatment by others in everyday life (Bies & Moag, 1986; Colquitt, 2001; Greenberg, 1993). Finally, although Aristotle anticipated not only distributive but also procedural and interpersonal justice concerns nearly 2,400 years ago, empirical studies addressing these latter concerns have only recently become a cottage industry in social psychology and neighboring disciplines (Brathwaite, 1989; Cleary, Darley, & Robinson, 2002; Vidmar, 2002). We do our best to summarize theoretical and empirical progress on the social psychological understanding of each of these five types of social justice concerns, with an advance apology to our readers for the necessarily selective nature of our review.

Distributive Justice

Aristotle and the History of the Concept

One of the earliest influential accounts of distributive justice—that is, the issue of how to allocate scarce resources fairly and appropriately—was Aristotle’s. In Book V of the Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle (ca. 322 BC-AD) observes that “we call just the things that create and preserve happiness and its parts for the citizen community” (2002, p. 159) and inquires about different types of justice and ways of being just (or unjust). According to one prominent interpretation, for Aristotelian justice, the hallmark of a just appointment is equality. In distributive justice, this consists in maintaining the same ratio of quantified goods or burdens to quantified agents. In rectification, it consists in restoring the parties to the relative position (semantically as “equality”) they were in before one harmed the other. (Bratton, 2002, p. 36)

Interpretational ambiguity arises from the fact that in Artic Greek, the same word (pronoia) is typically used to mean both justice and equity, and the word is best translated as “geometrical equality” or “proportionality” (Vlastos, 1963/1997). Thus, Aristotle says that a just distribution is one that is impartial in the sense of “treatings equals as equals” (see also Feinberg, 1973; Frankena, 1962; Marmorstein, 2005), but his conceptualization of distributive justice—his interpretation of what social scientists today would call principles of equity, proportionality, or merit (Deutsch, 1975; Lerner, 1974; Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978). Aristotle appreciated one of the chief difficulties of justice theory because it involved both distributive and procedural principles—namely, that decision makers disagree about how to allocate resources. Thus, the question is not just about how the outcomes are to be distributed, but also about whether the “inputs” (or merits) should be allocated in an equal way.

The matter of distribution “ according to merit” also makes this clear, since everybody agrees that what is just in distributions must accord with some kind of merit, but everybody is not talking about the same kind of merit; for democratic merit is in being born as a freeman, fiscal merit in wealth, or, for some of them, in noble descent, for aristocrats in excellence. (2002, p. 102, lines 113142-29)

Indeed, the notion that political or ideological factors influence one’s conception of social justice is a central theme of this chapter, and we will return to it in our review of the research literature.

A few other aspects of Aristotle’s theory of justice deserve mention, insofar as they, too, anticipate important social scientific contributions and controversies. For one thing, Aristotle addresses the relationship between what is legal and what is just, and he clearly sees a close relationship between them. He writes, for instance, that

People regard as “veto” both the person who breaks the law and the government that (i.e., unequally) enforces it, but, clearly, both the law-abiding person and the equal-minded ones are just. In that case, the just is what is lawful and what is equal, while the unjust is what is unlawful and what is unequal. (p. 159)

Aristotle’s discussion of the individual who is “grasping” or “unequal-minded” (pleonexia: the tendency to “get more

for oneself”); Broadie, 2002, p. 36) presages research on dispositional or individual differences in selfishness (i.e., a “pro-social substitution in the language of De Cremo & Van Yng, 1999) and its consequences for justice-related outcomes. Aristotle also observes that, “The worst sort of person . . . is one who . . . harms another by his treatment of himself and of those close to him, but the best sort . . . harms others when those excellence extends to his treatment of himself, but to his treatment of another; for it is this that is a difficult task” (2002, p. 160). This discussion foreshadows the social psychological distinction between “justice for oneself” and “justice for the other” (e.g., Gollwitzer, Schmitz, Schelke, Maas, & Bier, 2003; Sutten et al., 2008), as well as Lerner’s (2003) more general thesis that, in its purest form, justice motivation opposes self-interest.

Although Aristotle equated justice with acting in an equal manner (e.g., with the idea of self-favor, law-abiding man), he recognized that the degree of impartiality (or perhaps universality) required by the law can lead to perverse outcomes if one ignores the particulars of a given case or situation. He argues that a reasonable person may (on occasion) depart from adhering to what is legal (and therefore what is just) to arrive at a superior outcome (or deal).

It is clear, then, what the reasonable is, and that it is just, and better than just in one sense. From this it is also evident that those who are in office (and therefore deciding on what kind of things this is, and who is a stickler for justice in the bud sense but rather tends to take a less strict view of things, even though he has the law to back him up—this is the reasonable person. (2002, p. 175, lines 113735-113863)

Thus, justice may be the “sharpest of the excellences” (2004, p. 110, lines 112567-8), but it is not the only excellence (see also Rawls, 1971). Courage, wisdom, and self-control were also cardinal virtues, along with justice (Adelson, 1995). John Stuart Mill (1869) likewise distinguished between social justice and the more individual, or personal, principles, such as generosity and beneficence (see Frankena, 1962). Finally, it should be noted that Aristotle recognized the need for retributive (or rectificatory) justice, but by aligning his conception of justice with what is “law-abiding,” he ruled out the possibility that certain acts of retribution (or “vindicate justice”) could be considered just, even if they are seemingly motivated by a desire for justice.

Marxian Tradition

The writings of Karl Marx have probably inspired more social justice movements than any other piece of literature, with the possible exceptions of religious texts (see Aslenson, 1995; Solomon & Murphy, 2000). It is ironic, then, that Marx himself was notoriously suspicious about the meaning and use of the term “justice,” which (having studied law) he equated with the concept of jurisprudence. Marx saw justice as a force that is used by the state to “sate the desire of the oppressors” and to “abolish idleness,” and he expressed disdain for the “vulgar socialists” of his era who, in his view, championed empty slogans such as “a fair day’s wages for a fair day’s work.” He was also skeptical about philosophical attempts to develop abstract or universal conceptions of justice that transcended specific social and historical circumstances, such as those professed by Kant or Hegel (see L. J. L. & J. T. Jost, 2007). Thus, Marx scholars agree that Marx generally eschewed justice-based arguments in making the case for revolution and the overthrow of the capitalist system (see Tucker, 1969; Wood, 1972/1980). Instead, Marx appealed to collective self-interest, as in the famous line from The Communist Manifest: “Workers of the world, unite; you have nothing to lose but your chains!” That is, he saw it precisely in the objective interests of the working class to overthrow the capitalist system, and he assumed that their material life circumstances would (eventually) lead them to this realization.

Even if Marx himself saw little revolutionary potential in appeals to social justice alone, his critical discourse discerned in his writings the seeds of a powerful justice-based critique of capitalism (e.g., Campbell, 2001; Husami, 1978/1980). For instance, Marx argued that capitalism depends for its very existence on “surplus value” being extracted through the labor of workers. The basic idea is that no worker is ever paid what his or her work is actually worth (to the employer, that is, the value of what is produced; otherwise, there would be no profit (or profit motive). But the worker who wants to survive and provide for his or her family may be forced to sell his or her labor to the society but to produce wealth for those capitalists who happen to control the means of production. Marx clearly denounced this situation as a form of “exploitation,” and it is one of the reasons that he predicted (and longed for) the transition from capitalism to socialism and communism, which he believed would finally put an end to class-based oppression. Thus, Marx objected to the stark economic inequality between social classes that characterizes the capitalist mode of production on grounds that are basically indistinguishable from considerations of social justice (see also Campbell, 2001; Husami, 1978/1980; Konow, 2003). At the same time, he worried that certain conceptions of justice would be used to provide ideological cover for the status quo.

There is also Marx’s normative claim, in his Critique of the Gotha Program, that under socialism, the appropriate principle of justice is the distribution of wealth “as one’s ability to each according to their needs” (see Miller, 1999). As Lerner (1974) and Deutsch (1975) point out, taking into account the needs of individuals is a principle
of distributive justice that is not necessarily incorporated in the conception of justice is including Aristotle's, but need considerations are more than a reaction to actual deficiencies of resources" (Schwinger, 1986, p. 223), and they function much like other distributive justice principles, especially in relationships built on trust. Similarly, value is often associated with the principle of equality of outcomes (as well as opportunities) rather than individuals and social classes, and many interpret Marx's demand for a "classless society" as a call for thoroughgoing egalitarianism with respect to distributive outcomes (e.g., see Campbell, 2001).

It is possible that as a practical matter Marx's conception of "weakening solutions" led him to underestimate the extent to which perceptions of social injustice based on principles of equality or need (and the accompanying sense of moral outrage that accompanies them) contain revolutionary potential. Research throughout the social and behavioral sciences has shown that anger in response to felt injustice—that is, moral outrage—is one of the most robust predictors of participation in collective action and motivation for social change (e.g., Curr, 1970, Martin, Scully, & Levitt, 1980; Montada & Schneider, 1985; Moore, 1978, Tyler & Smith, 1989; Van Zomeren, Poonsens, & Spors, 2008; Waskul, Jost, Tyler, & Chen, 2007). Although Marx himself was deeply angered by the exploitation of workers in capitalist society, he sought to develop a revolutionary historical analysis and therefore said much less about social justice than he might otherwise have done.

**Liberal-Progressive Tradition**

Due in part to Marx's skepticism, the concept of "social justice" was more readily embraced by liberals and proponents of "socialism proper." (Miller, 1999, p. 3). There are two major liberal traditions that are most responsible for scholarly and practical interest in questions of social justice. Sandel (1988) sums up these traditions succinctly in posing the following question: "Should justice be founded on liberal principles or on a framework that gives rise to utilitarian solutions (Sorensen, Morel, Lowenberg, Nystrom, & Cohen, 2001; Koenigs, et al, 2007). Interestingly, cognitive load manipulations interfere with the type of moral reasoning that gives rise to utilitarian solutions (Greene, Morel, Lowenberg, Nystrom, & Cohen, 2008). When emotional processing predominates, people look much more like "deontological" theorists adhering to moral absolutes than utilitarians making complex calculations (see also Baron, 1993).

**Deontological Approaches**

Deontologists hold that determinations of right and wrong depend not only on the consequences of human action but also on other considerations, including transcendent justice principles, such as the assumption that it is wrong to kill an innocent, healthy person under any circumstances. One of the most famous proponents of a deontological approach to justice, Immanuel Kant (1785/1993), proposed that a "categorical imperative" exists to "[act] only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law" (p. 39). In other words, justice requires us to do only those things that it would make rational sense to universalize. Lying to gain personal advantage, for instance, is an action that would not be rational to act on the basis of self-interested motives do indeed evaluate the fairness of various distr(butional) schemes in ways that are at least somewhat similar to how Rawls theorized they should behave (Bond & Park, 1991; Brickman, 1977; Michelbach, Scott, Matland, & Bornstein, 2003; Schultz & May, 1997). For instance, Finnemore, Mennell, and Ordóñez (1993) found that most people sought to maximize the minimum standard of living in their society. However, there are studies showing clear departures from what Rawls would have expected (e.g., Currie, 1979). Most dramatically, a research program summarized by Foschi and O'Brien (1992) revealed that many of the participants in their experiments, which were conducted in the United States, Canada, and Poland, opted for a "floor constraint" (some safety net) but without any "ceilings" (i.e., limitation on maximum income). Their preferences, in other words, included social systems that contained more inequality than Rawls' theory would allow. Although this evidence does not disconfirm Rawls' (1971) theory of what is objectively just, it does suggest that actual decision makers find it challenging to leave behind their own personal experiences and values in order to adopt a "veil of ignorance." The fact that social group and ideological differences are frequently observed in experiments involving "hypothetical societies" suggests that people are anchored to a considerable extent by the economic realities and social beliefs that operate in their own societies, even when they are explicitly instructed to ignore them (Bond & Park, 1991; Mitchell, Tetlock, Mennell, & Ordóñez, 1993; Mitchell, Tetlock, Newman, & Lerner, 2003; Scott, Matland, Michelbach, & Bornstein, 2001).

**Conservative Critique of the Liberal-Socialist Tradition**

It should be clear from the foregoing that most philosophical conceptions of social justice, especially those that emphasize the "universalizing" (model-based) principles, were developed by liberals or socialists who were critical of traditional social, economic, or political arrangements (e.g., see Barry, 2005). Miller (1999) notes, for example, that "social justice has always been, and must always be, a critical idea, one that challenges us to reform our institutions and practices in the name of greater fairness" (p. x). This explains why the concept of social justice is sometimes denounced by political conservatives and others on the political right who seek to vindicate existing institutions that they regard as—if not always perfectly just—at least necessary, efficient, or otherwise defensible (e.g., Hayek, 1976). Historians often trace the origin of modern political conservatism to Edmund Burke, an Irish-born member of Parliament in England who advocated for the British Revolution and encouraged his fellow citizens to "look backward to [the authority of their ancestors] rather than to turning to revolution" (Burke, 1759/1958, p. 30; see also Viner, 1956, White, 1900). Burke and his followers thus
reached liberal and socialist ideas as well as the broader intellectual content of the Scientific Enlightenment in which those ideas were developed (Jost, 2009), expressing “contempt for all forms of egalitarianism, which struck [Burke] as a doctrine that is profoundly at odds with all the evidence of nature and history” (Shapiro, 2003, p. 152). Burke also emphasized the importance of tradition and favored gradual, incremental reforms over more radical social change, because he believed that “conserving an imperfect inherited world from the worse imperfections that human beings are capable of contriving is the business of political leadership” (p. 152). To this day, political conservatism can be characterized in terms of two major principles, namely traditionalism (or resistance to change) and, relatively, the justification of inequality or hierarchy (Jost, Glauser, Kringlas, & Sulloway, 2003). Most (but not all) liberal democracies (and libertarians) have offered new theories of social justice, they have tended not to dismiss principles of need and equality outright but rather to subordinate them (at least on occasion) to other principles, such as merit, prosperity, and personal freedom (e.g., Nozick, 1974; Smith, 1776; Solomon & Murphy, 2000). It has been suggested that conservatives possess unique “moral intuitions” and that they place a higher premium on the ingroup, obedience to authority, and maintaining parity (Haidt & Graham, 2007). However, the glorification of ingroup, authority, and purity concerns have led to self-serving biases (e.g., at least in dog-eaters associated with authoritarianism and even geococ (e.g. Altemeyer, 1996; Kelman & Harlson, 1989; Rummel, 1997; Staub, 1952). This makes them unlikely candidates (on normative grounds) to be considered just principles. A stronger case can be made for moderate conservative principles such as desert, merit, prosperity, and personal freedom (e.g., Mitchell et al., 2003; Nozick, 1974; Smith, 1776; Solomon & Murphy, 2000). Some interpret the fact that political orientation is correlated with justice beliefs to mean that disagreements over what is just are ultimately ideological and therefore intractable; others aspire to elevate the terms of debate by bringing scientific evidence to bear on the selection and application of various judicious principles in resource allocation.

Social Psychological Theories and Evidence

Equity Theory

Equity theory has been more broadly influential to the empirical study of social justice than the one that arguably came first: equity theory. Aristotle’s (384–322 BCE) arguments pertaining to justice, that is, “equality of ratios” (2002, p. 156; line 1131x13). This insight provides the starting point for equity theory, as developed by Homans (1961); Adams (1965); Blau (1968); Walster, Berscheid, & Walster (1973); and Walster, Berscheid, & Schneidermann, & Greenberger, 1984; Van Vrumen & Busk, 1999) to organizational behavior (Ambrose & Kalik, 1999; Bolino & Turner, 2008). Equity produces physiological arousal (Markowitz, 1988), and the desire to establish (or restore) equity appears to be an important factor in children’s resource allocations (Leventhal & Anderson, 1970; see Lerner, 1974). Participants are especially likely to follow the equity norm when distributing rewards between themselves and a competitor in the presence of a mirror, presumably because the mirror increases adherence to salient social norms (Greenberg, 1980). Perceptions of equity are related to perceptions of stability and controllability in raw marriages and other close relationships (Ute, Hatfield, Traumann, & Greenberger, 1984; Van Vrumen & Busk, 1990; but see Montada, 2003; Sprecher & Schwartz, 1994), and perceptions of inequity (i.e., feeling underbenefited) can also help to explain the effects on self-esteem of inequity caused by high levels of social control (Glenston, Iida, Bolger, & Sharot, 2003). Perceptions of inequity also explain seemingly anomalous behavior in workplace settings, including employee theft of property belonging to an organization that is seen as underserving its employees (Greenberg, 1995). A key contributor to “social loafing” (i.e., the tendency for people to exert less effort in the presence of others) is the assumption by some group members that their co-workers will do less than their share (Jackson & Harackiewicz, 2018). This is not to say that all forms of emotional responses, those apparently caused people to diminish their own involvement to maintain the balance of equity. In one study, participants who were led to commit a transgression and then forgiven for it were more likely than others to comply with a subsequent request, presumably because they were shown that they could get away with it (Eisenberg & Competo, 1995). It is important to note that, when there is a sense that a gift, or gift, that upsets the balance of a relationship” (Kelil & Elland, 1999, p. 864) and creates a psychological need to reestablish balance (or equity). Austin and Walster (1974) proposed that, when computing equity, people’s initial perceptions are not simply compared themselves with specific referents but also form perceptions of “trans-relational” equity or “world equity,” which refers to the overall degree of equity (or inequity) that is present in the totality of a person’s relationship. If people is present in one’s relational framework or in one’s social worlds. People also use stereotypes and social judgments to subjectively evaluate equity. In equity research, it results from a decision that was made by another person (as opposed to oneself), and (b) they believe that a different decision could have reasonably been made (Cronqvist & Falger, 1989). If a situation of equity is perceived as
people are worse off than others” (p. 3); see also Williams, 1993). As others have pointed out, that justice always requires perfect equality or that equality is the only relevant principle of social justice. The need for equality, in which goods or access to goods are treated equally, is generally not discussed. People can have different views on how social justice should be achieved, and these views may differ depending on the context. The principle of equality should therefore be utilized to “achieve the right place at the right time” (p. 200). However, in practice, the principle of equality is frequently neglected, and the principle of merit should never be used to allocate “goods and services that people regard as necessities, such as health care” (p. 200). On this point, there is general agreement between subjective and objective perspectives (see also Luhman, 1985). Research participants do feel that different types of resources should be allocated on the basis of different justice principles (Pitsk & Tietlock, 1997; Tornblom & Pitsk, 1983), and that burdens and necessities should be distributed with regard to considerations of need and rather than merit (e.g., Gansler & Peer, 2006; Matarire & Yuvait, 2007; but see Tornblom, Mihatsson, & Jonsson, 1991).

Cooperative Versus Competitive Social Systems

Deutsch (1976) offered an analysis that was highly compatible with that of Lerner (1974) but differed in two significant ways. First, whereas Lerner focused on the forms of distribution that would be seen as most just in various social contexts, Deutsch (building on his earlier work in Lewin’s Group Dynamics laboratory) addressed the related but distinct issue of which forms of distribution would be most effective at helping a group to reach a given goal. Second, Deutsch outlined three, rather than four, primary types of competitive versus cooperative justice: dropping the conception of justice as law-abidingness, particularistic punishment, and the “acts of the state . . . may be Evans himself” (Frankena, 1962, p. 3). Hence, Deutsch’s taxonomy is a little more Aristotelian and a little more Maxonian. The significant “equity” principle is emphasized in Deutsch’s (1985) “true law of social relations” (p. 93) that “is a characteristic process and effects elicited by a given type of social relationship and led to dictate that type of social relationship” (p. 93); that is, it is maximized by the cooperation and appropriately structured systems beget cooperation.

According to Deutsch (1975), the equity principle should be emphasized only in those situations in which “economic productivity is a primary goal” (p. 143), if the system is competitive and even conflict as social by-products. By contrast, in the context of social systems that prioritize personal development, communal welfare, and cooperation, the most constructive method of distributing resources is one that is based on need and equality, consistent with Maxonian social theory. Failing to consider the needs of its members, a cooperative system may even be detrimental to the well-being of any group that has a primary concern for the development and welfare of its members” (p. 147). Furthermore, if it is clear that the maximization of the social relations of equality should be the distributive principle of choice.

Deutsch, distributing resources purely based on equity would disrupt the mutual respect required for cooperation in a productive relationship (Mitchell, 1995). Deutsch has reviewed several studies contrasting the commonly held notion that distribution rewards (and punishments) on the basis of the equality principle necessarily results in an increase in efficiency or productivity. He found that egalitarianism enhanced cooperation and, therefore, group performance.

Research has generally supported Deutsch’s contention that the three principles of justice, equality, and need tend to vary in their applicability, and so are differentially valued as a function of situational and dispositional factors (e.g., Baumeister & Tice, 1986; Boland & Tichy, 2008; Clark & Mills, 1979; Deutsch, 1985; Reis, 1984). Howewer, it is not always clear whether this variability in allocation preferences is due to justice-related or instrumental concerns: that is, people might prefer one principle to another for reasons other than their concern for social justice (Montada, 2003). People’s allocations of resources appear to reflect a blend or combination of different justice principles along with considerations of self-interest (e.g., Jost & Azizi, 1996; Kanwisher, 2000; Milosky, 1983), and they may engage in nearest-rationalizations of certain distributive principles and outcomes that they would not necessarily choose ex ante (Diethelm, Samuel, Ross, & Bazarov, 1997).

Do Liberals and Conservatives Prefer Different Justice Principles? Given that one of the core ideological differences between political liberals and conservatives concerns the value that is placed on equality of outcomes (e.g., Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003), it is not unusual to expect that justice preferences and judgments covary with this reticular worldview characteristic (Koenig, 1996; Livine, 1997; Emir, 2002; Fargason, Babyak, & Sikes, 2008; Ross & Beck, 1997; Skita & Tietlock, 1993). In so-called “hypothetical society” paradigms, for instance, liberals generally prefer more egalitarian distributions of wealth that also offer protections for those who are in greatest need, whereas conservatives are more likely to prioritize equity, efficiency, and individual merit (Mitchell, Tietlock, Mellers, Ordóñez, 1993; Mitchell, Tietlock, Newman, & Lerner, 2003). These differences in justice preferences are generally consistent with philosophical differences among socialists, liberals, and conservatives that go back several centuries (Jost, 2009).

Mitchell and colleagues (1993) observed that ideological polarizations were greatest for judgments of hypothetical Two, Four, and Twenty distributions. Perhaps, it is because liberals see the justice system as half empty under such circumstances (emphasizing the role of chance), whereas conservatives see it as half full (emphasizing ability and effort). Napier and Jost (2006a)
Social Justice

A Typology of Social Justice Concerns

found that economic inequality is differentially related to self-reported happiness levels for liberals and conservatives. Specifically, increases in economic inequality in U.S. society from 1974 to 2004 (measured in terms of various macro-economic indices) was associated with decreased subjective well-being in general, but liberals were more strongly affected than conservatives, apparently because the conservative belief that inequality is often legitimate and meritorious provides a kind of "ideological buffer" against the negative hedonic effects of inequality.

Relative Deprivation and Social Comparison

Unlike the preceding accounts, relative deprivation theory does not specify which principles of distributive justice people will prefer under specific circumstances. Rather, it addresses a more general question about the social and psychological processes leading to the appraisal of a given situation as either just or unfair (Festinger, 1950). In essence, the theory holds that people will experience moral outrage and engage in collective action aimed at changing an unjust status quo if and only if they perceive themselves to be relatively deprived (Tyler & Smith, 1996). Theories that pivot on the concept of relative deprivation are not theories about how to recognize or implement social justice per se; rather, they seek to understand when people will and will not perceive social injustice, and the question of whether such perceptions are accurate or inaccurate is largely unstudied. Davies (1962) proposed an influential theory of revolution in which he argued that social and political unrest is most likely to occur when a prolonged period of improvement in living conditions is followed by a brief but painful period of decline, such that the gap between people's subjective ratings of their positions and their objective position becomes intolerable. This argument sought to reconcile (a) Marx's claim that abject deprivation would lead members of underprivileged groups (such as the working class) to realize that they have "nothing to lose but their chains" and therefore rebel against the status quo, and (b) Tocqueville's historical observation that "the most overwhelming oppression often but[s] into rebellion against the yoke the moment it begins to grow lighter." Several historical cases—including Dutt's Rebellion of 1857 in the Russian Revolution of 1917—seem to fit the doctrine of Davies's account, which is sometimes referred to as "progressive" relative deprivation theory. Building on this work, Gurr (1970) proposed that a significant gap between people's expectations and their capabilities creates "the necessary precursor when least forms of deprivation are experienced" (Foster & Mathias, 1995). Crosby (1976) originally proposed that five conditions must be met for feelings of individual (or egocentric) relative deprivation to ensue: (1) a person must notice that another person who has the same or more to do as she must desire what the other person has; (2) she must feel entitled to it for some reason; (3) she must think that she cannot be realistically attained, and (4) she must not feel personally responsible for the state of deprivation. Reflecting on the results of survey research, Crosby, Mosher, and Loewenstein (1986) revised the list of preconditions to two—wanting something and feeling that one deserves it. The other three factors, they concluded, were more distal causes of relative deprivation, and their effects were hypothesized to be mediated by the two more proximal states of wanting and desiring. Crosby identified three prerequisites that are necessary and/or sufficient to engender feelings of relative deprivation is still largely unknown (but see Bernstein & Crosby, 1980; Olson & Hazlewood, 1986; Olson, Roence, Meen, & Robertson, 1995). Nevertheless, feelings of personal deprivation have been linked to a number of consequential outcomes, including support for collective action, the holding of divisions of labor (Plessner & Mika, 1998; but see Biernat & Wotman, 1991); career disengagement (Tougas, Rinforces, & De la Sablonniere, 2005); and symptoms of stress among the unemployed (Walker & Mann, 1987).

Criticism and Limitations

Relative deprivation theorists tend to assume, often tacitly, that members of disadvantaged groups are "revolutionaries-in-waiting," and that they will fight against the status quo as soon as the full and frustrating extent of their deprivation is made obvious through direct social comparison with others (or with what might have been). Members of disadvantaged groups, too, are hypothesized to feel relatively deprived when actual outcomes fall short of their expectations. Thus, Gurr (1970) concluded that "men are quick to aspire beyond their social means and quick to anger when those means prove inadequate, but slow to accept their limitations." The problem is that too many data sets fail to corroborate these strong claims (e.g., Gurr & Tomes, 1982; McPhail, 1977; Thompson, 1989; see also Kinder & Sears, 1985, pp. 701–702). The perception of relative deprivation is and of itself does not seem to be a sufficient cause of anger, protest behavior, or participation in collective action as Crosby (1976) suggested (see also Klandermans, Van der Toorn, & Van Stokkelburg, 2008; Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). At the least, people must perceive the status quo as illusorily inferior to a more attractive alternative (or as highly contingent on ideological and other factors, e.g., see Jost & Major, 2001; Tyler, 2006). As a result, rebellion is much rarer than relative deprivation and related theoretical perspectives would imply (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2003; O steckel, 2006). It is apparent that "men are quick to aspire" beyond their means, social psychological research reveals that "social comparison biases tend to prevent awareness of deprivation, and attribution biases tend to legitimize disadvantage" (Mojon, 1994, p. 294; see also Crockett & Nosek, 1998; Jost, 1997). Thus, despite the fact that women are dramatically underpaid compared with men and suffer various other forms of discrimination, women generally show little discontent or resentment concerning their pay and employment status (Crosby, 1982) and no overall deficit in terms of satisfaction when compared to men (Diener, 1984; but see Pulkkinen, Diener, & Sandvik, 1991). It is telling that Pettigrew (2002) ultimately regarded the relative deprivation perspective "not as [a] fully developed
Theory itself, but rather a "key construct that can link different levels of analysis" (p. 353). Neither Schilder and col-
leagues (1965) nor Davis (1959) identify specific psychological processes—
cluding Davis (1959), Davies (1962), Runciman (1966), Pettigrew (1967), Gurr (1970), and Crosby (1976)——
were able to specify the precise circumstances under which drawing
upward social comparisons would consistently lead the
adolescent to respond in a group-oriented fashion.
Alas, this work has addressed
psychological processes associated with victim derogation
(see also Napierski, Mandishoda, Anderson, and Jost, 2006;
Ryan, 1971). For instance, research participants who learn
about a woman's suffering and are denied the opportunity to
help her directly are more likely to defame her char-
acter than are participants who are able to help her in some way (Lerner & Simmons, 1966).
Studies of this type suggest that people are generally threatened by
the presence of injustice and are therefore motivated to
restore justice (i.e., through reparations); however, if they are
not given the opportunity to help, they may engage in
social strategies such as belligerent behavior and
/munificent behavior (e.g., Lerner & deWit, 1969).
The present line of research attempts to determine the extent to which these individuals
are motivated by the desire to see injustice
abolished and to help others who have been
injured by others (e.g., Lerner & Brown, 1970).
On this view, human beings want admirable to believe
that their efforts and investments will be appreciated;
that is, they will be rewarded for delaying personal grati-

cation and participating in civil society (Lerner, 1975, 1980). A natural extension of this "personal contract" is the
motivational belief that people's outcomes (i.e., rewards or pun-
ishments) are caused by "who they are or what they have done" (Lerner, 1987, p. 108). According to Lerner (1980),
people cling so strongly to this "fundamental delusion"
that any information contradicting it—such as children suffering
from terminal illness or innocent persons being victimized—
causes people to re-evaluate their views. Typically, people
convince themselves that the social world operates according to
rules of derigerness, namely that people "get what they

deserve and deserve what they get." The desire (or motive) to
attain justice—both for oneself and for others—is thus
linked to the human need to commit to long-term goals
(Hafer, Bégue, Chorge, and Demong, 2005; Lerner, 1977,

More than 40 years of empirical research has supported
specific hypotheses derived from just world theorizing
(Furnham, 2003; Hafer & Bégue, 2003; Lerner, 1980;
Lerner, Sider and Miler, 1979). Much of this work has addressed
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To maintain the belief in a just world, people may reconsti-
(truct or selectively recall) details of the past, such as mis-
ninremembering that a smaller lottery prize was awarded to a "good" person than was actually the case (Callan, Kay, Davidenko, & Ellard, in press; Haines & Jost, 2000).
Reaction-time paradigms reveal that exposure to information
that threatens (vs. satisfies) the belief in a just world (e.g.,
a crime "gets away with it" vs. being apprehended) produces
an automatic preoccupation with justice-related constructs
(Hafer, 2000a; Kay & Jost, 2003). Knowledge of a victim's innocence (Corneva, Vala, & Aguiral, 2007), pro-
longed suffering (Callan, Ellard, & Nicol, 2006), or status
as an ingroup member (Aguiral, Vala, Corneva, & Prenta,
2008) exacerbates justice concerns at an implicit as well as
explicit level of awareness. Daibert's (1998, 2001, 2002) work suggests that the belief in a just world serves an
additional functional that was not outlined in Lerner's original for-
mulation of just world theory; specifically, it operates as a personal resource that helps people cope with injustices
that occur in their daily lives (see also Lippkus & Bissonnette,
1996; Lippkus, Daibert, & Siggler, 1996; Schmid & Döbel,
1999; Tomasca & Blaschovic, 1994; Vermunt, 2007). This may help to explain its prevalence and even its high degree of
social desirability (Alves & Correia, 2008).

Research on dispositional measures of the belief in the
just world, which was initiated by Rubin and Peplau (1975)
and summarized first by Lerner and Miller (1978), has
continued to flourish (Hafer, 2000b). However, it is also essential
to recognize that some of the constructs that were once thought to
be independent of each other are in fact related to each other and to
differing beliefs about social justice (see, e.g., Cialdini, 1988).

Social psychologists have devoted considerable research
attention to understanding how meanings of deservingness (and entitlement) are related to processes of attribution,
stereotyping and prejudice, perceptions of discrimination,
ideological psychology, and appraisals of the legitimacy of social systems (e.g., Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost & Major, 2001). Major, 1994). Studies show that perceptions of personal causation are
5

2Feather (1994) has distinguished between concept of
deservingness and entitlement, noting that "whereas deserving-
ness pertains more to the evaluative structure of actions and their outcomes ... entitlement pertains more to an external, common-
ally based framework of laws, rules, and social norms that may be
easily acknowledged or more formally prescribed" (p. 368; see also Feather, 1999). Major's (1994) account of entitlement, however, bereaves the distinction: "If an individual fulfills causal preconditions, he or she will feel entitled to certain outcomes.
These preconditions may be either ascribed (e.g., she is a particular race or sex) or earned (e.g., she has made particular contri-
butions); there is a sense of equivalence between the actor's perceived entitlements and attributes or acts" (Major, 1994; p. 285). Other authors (e.g., Mischel, 1968; Wegener & Libby, 2000) have posited a hierarchy of the tendency to see one's actions as due to one's own dispositionality or to situational factors that impinge on the action. The present line of research attempts to determine the extent to which these interpretations coexist or are in competition; this will be discussed in a subsequent section.

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The importance of both of these resources is frequently
allocated on the basis of the who the recipient is and various other variables that are generally accepted
case and legimate (see Feather, 2008).
deservingness lead people to hold more and less favorable attitudes toward high and low status targets, respectively (e.g., Werner, Perry, & Magnuson, 1988). Endowment of just world beliefs with system-justifying ideologies that emphasize deservingness are associated with increased prejudice toward African Americans and obese people, among other stigmatized groups (Crandall & Martinez, 1996; Rito, 1988). Attritions of deservingness act not only as causes but also as releasers of prejudice (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003), insofar as they seem to justify the expression of preexisting negative attitudes toward certain social groups (Allport, 1954; Jost & Banaji, 1994). Exposing positive political campaigns, which often relies heavily on the assumption of personal deservingness (or individual responsibility), also predicts both explicit and implicit devaluation of those who are disadvantaged in society, including African Americans (e.g., Crandall, 1994; Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004; Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003; Nosek, Banaji, & Jost, 2009; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Alls, 1996; Sears, van Laar, Castilla, & Kottman, 1997; Sidanius, Pratto, & Bobo, 1996).

The concept of deservingness is useful for understanding resentment directed at people who are extremely successful (i.e., "tall poppies"). According to Feather (1994), people first try to determine whether an individual is personally responsible for their outcome; that is, the extent to which "the outcome is assumed to be produced by the person and related to the person's intentions" (p. 12). Next, they consider the value of the behavior and the outcome. When positively valued behavior is seen as leading to a negatively valued outcome (e.g., cheating and losing the race), the perceiver will experience the outcome as deserved. By contrast, less value is attached to the behavior and outcome (e.g., cheating and winning the race or cheating and losing it) that lead to perceptions that the outcomes are undeserved. Thus, people tend to react negatively to successes that are seen as undeserved and are eager to see "tall poppies" fall under such circumstances (Jost, 1994; 1999).

Much research, including studies of relative deprivation and social comparison processes mentioned previously, has explored the ways in which people's perceptions of entitlement relate to issues of social justice. One useful focus has been the conditions that lead members of disadvantaged or low status groups (such as women) to develop a "depressed sense of entitlement" that leads them to be satisfied with less than others receive (Blanton, George, & Crocker, 2001; Callahan-Levy & Mosst, 1979; Hoffman & Silverman, 1990; Majors, 1994; Polak & Hett, 2001). The endorsement of various ideological belief systems—especially those that reinforce notions of meritocracy and deservingness—have been associated with the tendency of members of low status groups to view their own state of disadvantage as relatively legitimate (e.g., Crocker & Major, 1994; Jost, 2004; Olson & Hafer, 2001; Quin & Crocker, 1999). For example, women who score higher on the belief in a just world are less likely to report career-related discontentment (Hafer & Olson, 1993), and ethnic minorities who espouse the belief that it is possible to climb the status hierarchy, less likely to view negative outcomes as due to discrimination or unfairness (Major et al., 2002).

There is also experimental work showing that "depressed entitlement" (and tolerance of injustice more generally) can be produced or exacerbated under specific situational conditions. For instance, priming members of a low status group with stereotypical ideals makes them less likely to regard unfair treatment (by a higher status group member) as cause by sexism or discrimination (McCoY & Major, 2007; see also Biernat, Vescio, & Thao, 1996; Jost & Kay, 2005; Quin & Crocker, 1999). Research on system justification theory similarly suggests that people may be motivated (for episodic, existential, and relational reasons) to view inequalities among individuals and groups as fair, legitimate, and defendable rather than due to discrimination, unfairness, or historical accident (e.g., Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004). As with regard to the belief in a just world and many other areas of social justice research, system justification tendencies vary as a function of both dispositional and situational variability (Major, 1999; Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003; Major, 1999; 2005; Kury & Zanna, 2009; Kay, Gaucher, Peach, Laurin, Friesen, Zanna, & Spence, 2009).

Social Dilemmas Social dilemmas are situations that pit the individual interest against the group interest (McAllister, 1995). Despite considerable research into how such a conflict of interest in these situations typically derives from an interest in how people with "mixed motives" make difficult decisions, there are clear implications for social justice—principally for the distribution of resources across individuals and even generations of individuals. Experimentally created social dilemmas involve two essential characteristics: (a) at any given decision point, individuals receive higher payoffs for making selfish choices than they do for making cooperative choices... and (b) everyone involved receives lower payoffs if everyone makes selfish choices than if everyone makes cooperative choices" (Weber, Kopelman, & Messick, 2004, p. 281). Defined in these terms, there are three major classes of social dilemmas (i.e., miniature social systems) studied by experimentalists (Komorita & Parks, 1995). These are the prisoner's dilemma, the other is also likely to value the equal- ity of outcomes than are profligate (Ekel & Gilg, 2006). A similar distinction has been proposed between "altruistic cooperators," who seem to be more interested in positive outcomes for others than for themselves, and "reciprocal cooperators," who engage in prosocial behavior only to the extent that they expect to reciprocate (Kurzban & Rose, 2001; Perlüng & Galli, 2001).

But why, exactly, do prosocial cooperators more than prosocials? Two major explanations have been offered. First, it has been suggested that prosocials are more likely to construe the goal of cooperation in terms of maximizing the collective goal (as opposed to individual) rationality (Lienhard, Jussen, Rijkers, & Suhr, 1986; Simpson, 2004; Uzzi, Utterback, & Van Lange, 2004). Second, it is possible that prosocials are more likely than prosocials to expect that others will cooperate rather than defect (e.g., Mosso, Warlop, Van Avermaet, Cornelisse, & Werkhoven, 2003). Interested readers are directed to more detailed reviews of how social value orientation (Bogaert, Boone, & Declerck, 2008) and other individual difference variables (Van Lange, De Cremer, Van Dijk, & Van Vugt, 2007) predict behavior in experimentally created social dilemmas. The general assumption is that justice-related behavior in these situations has fairly deep roots both in personality and socialization experiences (Au & Kwong, 2004; De Cremer & Van Lange, 2001; J. T. Jost & J. J. Jost, 2009; Kuhlman, Carnes, & Cunka, 1986; Van Lange, 2000).

Structural Factors Several studies have investigated the influence of discrimination structure on cooperation versus competitive behavior. For instance, cooperation increases when social structural features (e.g., direct social contact) foster the development of a common group identity (Glickler & Peir, 1999; Kramer & Brewer, 1984; Orbell, Van der Kragt, & Dawes, 1988; Wit & Kerr, 2002).

Although systems for monitoring and sanctioning the individual behavior may be unproductive, in place, they tend to undermine subsequent cooperation once they are removed because they reduce perceptions of others' cooperative intent (Yamagishi, 1988; see also Mueler, Van Dijk, De Cremer, & Wilke, 2006; Tyler & Jost, 2007). When people are highly uncertain about the availability of a collective resource, they expect that others will engage in greater competing behavior and also har- vest more resources themselves (Budescu, Rapportop, & Saleeber, 1995; Gustafsson, Biel, & Gärting, 1999; but see de Kock, Wiets, & De Roel, 2007; Van Dijk, Wilke, & Meutens, 1999; Wit & Wilke, 1998).

One common response to social dilemma situations is to appoint a leader who is expected to oversee the distribution of resources (e.g., by deciding who gets what). Leaders are, indeed, more likely to appoint a leader when they are aware that a valued resource is being rapidly depleted (Messick et al., 1983) and when the use of resources is
otherwise difficult to oversee (Samuelson, 1991). Group identification, as usual, plays an important role in determining the behavior of leaders and followers (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Those who identify strongly (vs. weakly) with their group are more likely to support the democratic election of a leader (Van Vugt & De Cremer, 1999) and to be inspired by committed, fair leaders to increase their level of cooperation (van Dijk, 2000). However, leaders may develop a sense of elevated entitlement, abandon norms of equality, and reserve an overabundance of resources for themselves—especially when they have been appointed rather than elected (De Cremer & Van Dijk, 2005). On the other hand, charismatic leaders can be effective at inducing even “prosocial” cooperation (De Cremer, 2002), whereas autocratic leaders increase the likelihood that members will abandon the group when faced with a conflict between personal and group interests (Van Vugt, Jessop, Hart, & De Cremer, 2004). These and other findings attest to the enduring significance of Lewin’s distinction between democratic vs. autocratic leadership—and Deutsch’s extrapolation to cooperative vs. competitive social systems—for analyzing justice-related procedures and outcomes.

The choice of whether to cooperate or not when confronted with a social dilemma depends to a great extent on how the situation is “framed” (or construed). Does it call for cooperation and the privileging of collectives (or communal) interests? Or does it offer a chance to maximize one’s own outcome? These variations in framing can influence when and under which conditions the social dilemmas situation is seen through one or the other of these frames. Specifically, the use of different labels (Batson & Moran, 1999; Liberman, Samsel, & Ross, 2004) or metaphors (Allison, Beggin, & Midgley, 1999) within the same context affects cooperation rates. Furthermore, the priming of specific mindsets (Elliot, Hayward, & Canon, 1998) and even incidental exposure to objects that symbolize competitiveness vs. cooperativeness (Kay, Wheeler, Bargh, & Ross, 2004) can lead people to construe the same dilemma situation in drastically different terms and, therefore, to behave in more or less prosocial ways (Kay & Ross, 2003; Tenbrunsel & Messick, 1999; Weber, Kopelman, & Messick, 2004).

Procedural Justice

Although the terms “social justice” and “distributive justice” are often used interchangeably by philosophers and lawyers (e.g., Miller, 1999), sociologists in recent decades have come to recognize that justice considerations pertain not merely to fairness but also to the methods or procedures by which decisions are made at work, in political life, in the family, etc. A major thrust of contemporary social psychological research has demonstrated that justice appraisals are determined at least as much, if not more, by the perceived fairness of procedural versus distributive factors (Tyler &Tyler, 1995). In common tradition, Thibaut and Walker (1975) were primarily interested in party-decision making, such as legal decisions made by judges or juries (see also Leventhal, 1980). This work demonstrated that the perceived fairness of the specific procedures used to render a verdict or decision; (b) severely inhibits people’s evaluations of both the final outcome and the decision maker. Researchers have not looked back since; there has been far more research on aspects of procedural justice than on aspects of other types (including distributive justice) over the past quarter of a century.

“Voice” and Other Procedural Justice Criteria

According to Walker, Lind, and Thibaut (1979), “the belief that the techniques used to resolve a dispute are fair and satisfactory in themselves” (p. 1402) follows from two major procedural features: (a) process control, referring to how much people are allowed to present evidence on their behalf before the decision is made, and (b) decision control; that is, whether individuals have any say in the actual rendering of the decision” (Brockenhofer & Wiesenfeld, 1996, p. 189; see also Ambrose & Arnaud, 2005). That is, people want to know that they will have input into (and are therefore able to exert at least some influence over) the decision-making process as well as the decision itself. Thibaut and Walker (1975) proposed that when people possess these two types of perceived control they are able to trust that procedures will be fair and that their short-term and especially long-term outcomes will be favorable in general (but see Azzi & Jost, 1997 for an application to majority-minority intergroup relations). Research has been supportive of the notion that process control (i.e., the chance to present one’s own “side” to a third-party decision maker) is a fundamental determinant of justice appraisals (e.g., Houdin, LaTour, Walker, & Thibaut, 1978; Thibaut & Walker, 1975; cf. Shapiro & Brett, 2005). Thibaut and Walker’s pioneering work has influenced many research projects, in particular, research on the so-called “voice effect” that is, the demonstration that the opportunity to express one’s views or feelings during the course of the decision-making process significantly increases perceptions of procedural fairness (Folger, 1977; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Van den Bos, 2005). Studies show that the presence of voice affects not only justice judgments but is also associated with increased positive affect, decreased negative affect, and greater trust in authorities (Folger, Brett, et al., 1990; Carr, Groce, & Corkum, 1979; Lind, Kanfer, & Earley, 1990; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Shapiro & Brett, 2005; Tyler & Blader, 2003; Tyler, Rasinik, & Spollichi, 1985; Van den Bos, Wilke, & Lind, 1998; Van Prooijen, Kamerans, & van Beest, 2006; Van Prooijen, Van den Bos, & Wilke, 2004).

As an example, it may seem that the only variable that influences perceptions of procedural justice. Leventhal, Karanja, and Fry (1980) identified six factors that can contribute to justice appraisals. To be considered fair, they argued, decisions must be made (a) consistently across time and times periods; (b) neutrally, that is, without bias, preconceptions, or self-interest; (c) on the basis of accurate information; (d) with an opportunity to make corrections if necessary; (e) on consideration of the interests of all relevant parties; and (f) ethically. Leventhal (1980) pointed out that, depending upon the specific circumstances, some of these “rules” may be weighted more heavily than others. Consistent with this view, situational differences (e.g., variability in the formality of a given decision-making setting) affect the criteria that people use in making judgments of procedural fairness (Bartlett-Howard & Tyler, 1986). Nevertheless, aggregating across a wide range of situations, people tend to prioritize three of these criteria—consistency, accuracy, and ethnicity—in determining whether procedural justice requirements have been satisfied (Bartlett-Howard & Tyler, 1986; Lind & Tyler, 1988).

Skitka (2002; Skitka & Houston, 2001; Skitka & Mullens, 2002) has argued that procedural justice concerns are suspended when people perceive "moral mandates"; that is, when there is a perception, especially strong about a specific instance of the outcome, such as whether or not abortion is legally protected. Moral mandates, as defined by Skitka and her colleagues, are to be distinguished from strongly held attitudes (Skitka, Thuman, & Surgis, 2005) and are associated with stronger reaction to the outcomes seen as violating the moral mandates (Mullen & Skitka, 2006). On the basis of her research, Skitka (2002) concluded that "when people have a mandate about an outcome, any means justifies the mandated end" and "fair procedures do not ameliorate the sense of injustice people experience when a mandated mandate outcome is threatened or rejected" (p. 594). Nager and Tyler (2008) reviewed this evidence and arrived at a different conclusion, namely that even when people experience intense moral conviction about a given issue (e.g., immigration, abortion, or civil rights), they are still more likely to accept a decision made by authorities when they believe that procedural fairness norms have been observed when they have not (see also Gibson, 2008; Tyler & Mitchell, 1994).

Why Do People Care About Procedural Justice?

There is little question that procedural characteristics affect overall perceptions of fairness and satisfaction and also exert downstream effects on an extremely wide range of social and organizational variables (Van den Bos, 2005, pp. 1141). 274-277; see also Greenberg, 1993; Sweeney & McFarlin, 1993). At the same time, different theoretical models of procedural justice (e.g., justice and performance) present competing (underlying causes of procedural justice effects (e.g., Croommanzo & Folger, 1988; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Tyler & Lind, 1992; Van den Bos & Lind, 2002). The question is why people care as much as they do about the procedures that are used to determine their outcomes and not just about the favorability of the outcomes themselves.

Instrumental Models

Thibaut and Walker (1975) initially proposed that people seek control (or voice) over both the process and decision because they want to ensure that the ultimate outcome will be fair and favorable (see also Walker, Lind, & Thibaut, 1979). The benefit of procedural fairness, in other words, were assumed to be tangible and substantial. Given the fact that people often exhibit an inability to realize by seeing their own “side” in a dispute as more correct and reasonable in comparison with that of their adversaries (Rous & Ward, 1996), it is possible to view the desire for fair procedures as a subtle expression of self-interest motivation (Folger, 1979; Shapiro & Brett, 2005; Tyler, 1994; Van Prooijen et al., 2008). However, this interpretation was not the one favored by Thibaut and Walker. As Van den Bos (2005) noted, "An important aspect of the Thibaut and Walker (1975) model was the focus on whether people received fair outcomes and not so much on how favorable outcomes were to people. . . it is therefore more appropriate to label these authors' theory as the 'instrumental model,' and . . . is wrong to call this the 'self-interest model'" (p. 284).

Relational Models

A clear alternative to instrumental explanations for why people care about procedural justice emerges from relational models of procedural justice (Tyler & Lind, 1992), such as the group-value model (Lind & Tyler, 1988). The basic idea is that people are concerned about the fairness of procedures largely because of the implications that these procedures hold for their feelings of self-worth, which are often derived from processes of social identification (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

274-277; see also Greenberg, 1993; Sweeney & McFarlin, 1993). At the same time, different theoretical models of procedural justice (e.g., justice and performance) present competing underlyings of procedural justice effects (e.g., Croommanzo & Folger, 1988; Folger, 1986). From this perspective, a person is experienced as unfair, people begin to compare what actually happened to what "could" have happened. To the extent that other references are available, that is, if people can easily imagine an alternative procedure, negative reactions (including perceptions of injustice) are more likely to ensue (see also Van den Bos, Lind, Vermunt, & Wilke, 1997).
As Tyler (1994) explains, “The basic assumption of the relational model is that people are predisposed to belong to groups and that belonging gives rise to attitudes and symbols that communicate information about their position within groups” (p. 851). The quality of procedures, it is argued, reflects the extent to which people are valued, respected, and understood by decision-making authorities. The notion that individuals for social coordination would be strongly motivated to obtain information about social standing is consistent not only with social identity theory but also with models of social belongingness, reputation, and shared reality (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Hardin & Higgins, 1996).

4 Brodsky & Wissefied (1996) have also noted that perceptions of procedural and distributive justice frequently interact with one another, such that “when outcomes are unfair or have a negative valence, procedural justice is more likely to have a direct effect on individuals’ reactions”; “when procedural justice is relatively low, outcome favorability is more apt to be positively correlated with individuals’ reactions to this type of procedural fairness and low outcome favorability engenders particularly negative reactions” (p. 191; regarding implications for self-evaluation, see also Brodsky, Heuer, & Magner, 2003).

Felger & Bies (1989; Tyler & Bies, 1990), who distinguished between “structural” and “interactive” components of decision making, stressed the importance of the former. The latter, Bies and Moag (1986) noted that people are sensitive not merely to the structure or content of a given procedure, but also to the “quality of interpersonal treatment” they receive during the enactment of organizational procedures. See also Colquitt, Greenberg, and Zapata-Phelan (2005). In other words, people do not just want fair procedures at work and elsewhere; they also want fair treatment in a much broader sense.

What constitutes fair interpersonal treatment? Bies and Moag (1986) initially focused on four aspects of social interaction: respect, truthfulness, justification (i.e., the provision of timely, adequate explanations for decisions), and propriety (i.e., sensitivity, appropriateness, and the avoidance of prejudicial treatment). The data speak fairly clearly to the predictive validity of any of these four facets of interpersonal justice (e.g., Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt, Croswell, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). This has only encouraged researchers to continue nominating additional candidates, such as dignity, the provision of feedback, and consideration of employees’ (and other constituents’) views (Felger & Bies, 1989; Greenberg, Bies, & Estes, 1991; Tyler & Bies, 1990). Some authors have suggested that interpersonal justice is comprised of two separate constructs, namely informational justice, which relates to the procedural aspects of communication processes such as speech, writing, and face-to-face, and interpersonal justice, which guarantees sensitive, respectful, and appropriate treatment. (See Bies, 2005; Colquitt, 2001; Greenberg, 1993).

Relationship Between Procedural and Interpersonal Justice

More than 20 years of research (most of which comes from the field of organizational behavior) confirms that perceptions of interpersonal justice help to explain how employees and others respond to decisions made by authority figures (Bies, 2005; Colquitt, Croswell, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001; Colquitt, Greenberg, & Zapata-Phelan, 2005). Everyone agrees that—in addition to or in conjunction with formal mechanisms, such as rules and policies—informal aspects of social interaction matter a great deal when people are asked to evaluate the fairness of procedures and outcomes. Nevertheless, scholars disagree considerably about whether interpersonal justice concerns should fall under the rubric of procedural justice or be considered under the umbrella of interactional type of justice concerns (see Bies, 2001, 2005; Boccol & Holmavall, 2001; Colquitt, Greenberg, & Zapata-Phelan, 2005; Greenberg, 1993; Tyler & Blader, 2003). A fair amount of ink has been spilled in an effort to resolve this question, but from our point of view the study of social justice is too important to be entered in semantic or taxonomic disputes for long. There may well be circumstances in which it is useful to distinguish between cases involving procedural (or formal) and interactional (or informal) justice, but little is gained by exaggerating or reifying such divisions. It seems reasonable enough to assume that procedural justice and interactional justice constitute two important aspects of ‘fairness of treatment’ (Van den Bos, 2005).

Probably the most compelling empirical case for separating the constructs comes from a series of studies suggesting that people spontaneously distinguish between structural and interactional aspects of procedures (see Bies, 2001). However, mapping this difference onto the concepts of procedural and interactional justice requires one to define procedural justice solely in terms of formal, structural aspects of procedures (Boccol & Holmavall, 2001). In point of fact, the mapping of interpersonal justice or procedural justice does not treat procedural justice in such limited terms; rather, it views interpersonal treatment as a key determinant of perceptions of procedural justice (Felger & Bies, 1989; Linder & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Bies, 1950; Tyler & Blader, 2003; Tyler & Linder, 1992). For example, relational models of procedural justice (e.g., group-value and group engagement models) stress that both formal structures and mechanisms and the manner in which these are implemented (i.e., fairness of treatment) are important for justice perceptions. For example, reasons they signal one’s degree of social acceptance, group inclusion, status, and worth (Tyler & Blader, 2003).

The notion that procedural and interpersonal justice are partially overlapping constructs also emerges from the research literature on organizational justice, in which both aspects are considered, as far as these refer to both qualities of treatment and social outcomes in themselves (see Miller, 2001, for a review). People tend to experience a wide range of violations, including structural forms of injustice, poor interpersonal treatment, and receipt of inequitable outcomes, as upsetting at least in part because they convey some measure of disrespect. Additional facts—such as the observation that people respond more harshly to perceived injustices when they are committed publicly rather than privately and that apologies can be quite effective at alleviating the sense of injustice—are supportive of the notion that feelings of injustice and disrespect are intertwined (Miller, 2001).

At the same time, there is some evidence indicating that people sometimes react differently to procedural versus interpersonal justice violations. For example, perceptions of procedural justice predict reactions to and evaluations of the system (e.g., one’s organization), whereas perceptions of interpersonal justice predict reactions to and evaluations of representatives of the system (e.g., supervisors) who communicate the
decisions (Amorose, Seblight, & Schninke, 2002; Ayee, Budwin, & Chen, 2002; Colquitt, 2001; Pulfer & Hester, 2002) are acceptable from the standpoint of social exchange theories (e.g., Croggsano, Prehar, & Chen, 2002; Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, & Taylor, 2000). To the extent that people view rules and procedures as under the control of the system, the perceived fairness of formal procedures should affect the "relationship" that people develop with the system. Likewise, to the extent that people view the quality of interpersonal treatment they receive as under the control of the person (or persons) with whom they are interacting, the perceived fairness of treatment should affect the relationships that people develop with those specific actors.

Finally, meta-analytic evidence reveals that procedural and interpersonal justice concerns are indeed correlated and partially overlapping, but they do predict somewhat different behaviors (Cohen-Corban & Spector, 2001; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). Informational and interpersonal justice concerns also predict somewhat different behavioral outcomes (Colquitt, 2001; Greenberg, 1993; Kernan & Hansen, 2001). However, to justify concepts procedurally and interpersonal justice perceptions as fundamentally different phenomena, one would want to show that structural and interpersonal aspects of procedures exert their influence on justice-related judgments and behaviors through different psychological mechanisms (Bobocel & Hofer, 2001). This point has yet to be demonstrated. But, rather than soothing to neatly compartmentalize different areas of social justice research, a better strategy for conveying the theoretical and practical significance of interpersonal justice might be to broaden the range of psychological mechanisms that we consider. For example, a variety of other studies of hostility, aggression, stigmatization, harassment, social exclusion, and inappropriate humor are not necessarily considered part of the social justice canon, but this work should be incorporated, insofar as it speaks directly to people's concerns.

Retributive Justice

Acting fails clearly of injustice, individuals, groups, and societies often enact some form of punishment. When apprehended and found guilty, perpetrators are jailed, fined, or in some way restrained for their actions. Such punishment schemes are typically seen as reasonable and legitimate by the public at large—indeed, they are seen as cornerstones of "justice system." But how, specifically, are these systems of punishment justified or, more precisely, "justified?" Questions such as these have been investigated most directly by scholars focused on the study of retributive justice concerns, namely the question of "how people who have intentionally committed wrong, morally wrong actions that either directly or indirectly harm others, should be punished for their misdeeds" (Carlsmith & Darley, 2008).

Is Vengeance Ours?

Two broad kinds of justifications for punishment have been offered, both of which originate in the seminal work of moral philosophers. Bentham (1962/1843) argued that punishment, to be justified, must serve some utilitarian purpose; that is, it must benefit society overall—making social life better or happier in some important way (cf. Greene & Cohen, 2004). How might punishment benefit society? It is certainly possible that the threat and/or execution of punishment serves to prevent or reduce the number of potential acts of injustice. Whether through specific deterrence (which aims to punish an offender sufficiently to deter him or her from committing similar offenses in the future), incapacitation (in which an offender is permanently prevented from committing additional offenses through incapacitation or some other method), or general deterrence (in which certain individuals are punished so as to deter others from committing similar offenses), a utilitarian approach emphasizes the potential benefits of punishment can have for society as a whole.

Kant (1790/1952) offered a different justification for punishment. He argued that punishment was fair insofar as people deserve to be punished for immoral behavior; punishment "balances the scales," so to speak. From a justness perspective such as this, the worse the perpetrator's actions, the harsher the punishment that is required to restore justice. As Kant said, punishment "should be pronounced over all criminals in proportion to their wickedness" (as cited in Cartman, 2002, p. 397). Although there are clear parallels here to equity theory and other work on distributive justice (see following text), Carlsamh and Darley (2008) distinguish between concepts of distributive and retributive justice as follows:

Distributive justice theorists tend to assume positive outcomes and are concerned with whether those positive outcomes should be shared out equally, equally . . . or on the basis of needs. In keeping with the standard conceptions in this area, we will reserve the term "distributive justice" to discuss resource allocations, and use "retributive justice" to refer to punishments that people deserve for their wrongdoing. (p. 195)

Increasingly, researchers have sought to flesh out the social psychological underpinnings of support for policies that involve justice concern. Generally, the aim is not to prescribe the best or most rational reasons to support policies of punishment (the normative question), but to discover why people support such policies; regardless of the objective quality of the reasons for their support (the descriptive question). For instance, researchers have found utilitarian, deterrence-related concerns against Kantian notions of just desserts to determine which is the stronger motivation of support for strict punishment (Carlsmith, 2006; Carlsamth, Darley, & Robinson, 2002; Darley, Carlsamth, & Robinson, 2000). One firm conclusion emerges from these studies: People are far more attuned to the severity of a crime and its moral significance when assigning punishment than they are to information pertaining to the likelihood of either general or specific deterrence (Carlsmith & Darley, 2008; Darley & Fittman, 2003; Kahaner, Schluss, & Sussman, 1998; McPartter, 1992).

More specifically, the desire for retribution is motivated by the perceived immorality of unjust behavior and the moral outrage that accompanies such perceptions. Studies show that people actively search for information related to morality when assigning punishment, that moral culpability and seriousness influence the harshness of recommended punishment, and that moral outrage mediates the relationship between the severity of an offense and recommended punishment (Carlsmith, 2006; Darley, Carlsamth, & Robinson, 2002; Darley, Carlsamth, & Robinson, 2000). Cultural and religious norm affect specific attitudes about retributive and other forms of justice (Cohen & Rozin, 2001; Henrich et al., 2001), but the desire to punish those who commit immoral acts remains fairly universal.

A fascinating contrast exists between the objective determinants of punishment attitudes, which are largely Kantian, and the subjective reasons that people give in explaining their support for punishment, which lean toward utilitarian and other forms of social justice (1983). Such a discrepancy has been observed, for example, in the dramatic context of debates over the use of torture in U.S. military prisons abroad. Although people who endorse torture generally say that their opinion is driven by their conviction that it successfully prevents future harm, experimental evidence reveals that support for harsh interrogation tactics is predicted by the perceived moral status of the target, and not by information concerning the likely effectiveness of the interrogation process (Carlsmith, 2008; Carlsamth & Sood, 2008). It remains to be seen how these normative views about justice system also play a role in popular support for torture, insofar as citizens deem torture to be more acceptable and justifiable to the extent that it is seen as part of the societal status quo, and that, when they are told (typically) that the nation’s military has been practicing torture for 40 years (Crandell, Eidebaum, Skita, & Morgan, 2000), would endorse the use of torture, regardless of the rationale that many people may be actively motivated (consciously or unconsciously) to support highly aggressive forms of retribution (such as torture and capital punishment) by one set of justice-related reasons (e.g., intuitions about fairness and deservedness) or even counter-social justice-related reasons, such as authoritarianism, social dominance, or racial prejudice (e.g., Darrow, 2007; Ho, Forster Lee, Forster Lee, & Crofts, 2002; Johnson, Whistone, Jackson, & Gatto, 1995; McKee & Feather, 2008; Ross & Berk, 1979; Sidanius, Mitchell, Halevy, & NavaroTe, 2000) and yet offer a different set of justice-related reasons (e.g., utilitarianism, deterrence) as post hoc justifications or rationalizations for taking or supporting punitive action. Such a possibility is broadly consistent with the notion that moral judgment is often the result of a complex interplay of moral, instrumental, and emotional considerations (Darley & Pittman, 2003; Haidt, 2001).

A far more optimistic image of retributive justice motives comes from theoretical models that emphasize the desire to affirm group or community values or standards (Tyler & Banker, 1997; Vidmar, 2002). The grounding idea is that unjust actions threaten the assumption that social consensus exists with regard to justice and morality and that meeting out punishment can be an effective way of affirming shared values (Weibel & Thielman, 2006). From this perspective, punishment serves to reinforce people's values which may therefore repair feelings of social identification—feelings that can be damaged when group members are confronted with an explicit challenge to their values (Vidmar, 2000). However, if one’s primary goal in assigning punishment is to reinforce a specific list of group norms, restorative justice—which involves coming up with prosocial alternatives to traditional forms of punishment—is probably a better option.

Restorative Justice

The concept of restorative justice represents an alternative to traditional ways of thinking about crime and punishment (Bazemore, 1998; Brantwicke, 1989; Roberts & Stalans, 2004). More than any other approach discussed in this chapter (and perhaps even the entire Handbook), notions about restorative justice have developed out of professional practice rather than academic circles. As a result, restor-
offered the following description: “One way to think of restorative justice is simply as a particular method for dealing with offenders and/or victim and their respective families and friends to discuss the aftermath of an incident, and the steps that can be taken to repair the harm an offender has done” (p. 217). Thus, rather than relying on a third party to impose a unilateral punishment, a particular offender, restorative justice programs give the justice process “back to the rightful owners: offenders, victims, and their respective communities” (Wenzel, Okimoto, Feather, & Platow, 2008, p. 376).

In restorative justice sentencing, the various parties are encouraged to express their feelings, come to an agreement about the harm that has occurred, and decide together what actions should be taken to reestablish a sense of justice. The aim of such programs is to promote healing and justice through open discussion, consensus, and forgiveness. Rather than simply meting out punishment—punishment can be part of restorative justice outcomes, but it is not usually considered to be necessary—the agreed upon actions often involve the offender participating in events or activities that are directly related to the restoration of justice (e.g., compensation in community service, etc.). When applied appropriately, this procedure is thought to help the victim and the broader community feel that justice has been restored and to reestablish the perpetrator into community life so that he or she will be more likely to respect the rights of others. Some people concern the “truth and reconciliation” commission established in South Africa, following the abolition of the apartheid system (Gibson, 2004).

Research provides modest support for the general effectiveness of restorative justice. It has been associated, for example, with decreased recidivism in groups of juveniles, bullies, and white-collar criminals (Ahmed & Braithwaite, 2006; Harris, 2006; Latimer, Dowden, & Muise, 2005; Murphy & Harris, 2007; Rodríguez, 2007). These data should be interpreted with caution, however, because self-selection biases and measurement problems limit the kinds of causal inferences that can be drawn. Furthermore, the effectiveness of restorative justice programs is likely to depend upon a number of contextual variables, including offense type (Braithwaite & Mibu, 1994). But, evidence from quasi-experimental paradigms in which a range of beneficial effects of restorative justice programs has been demonstrated across a range of contexts and offenses is especially impressive (Strang et al., 2006; Wallace, Exline, & Brunsmistzer, 2007).

From a psychological perspective, the crucial question is not simply whether such programs are effective but why. Although the earliest restorative justice programs originated in the late 1970s, serious intellectual attention exchange, in which victim and perpetrator can satisfy each other’s needs, may be a particularly effective way to help build a sense of community and integrate beneficial values. In restorative sentencing procedures, public opinion polls reveal that attitudinal support for restorative justice programs decreases significantly as the severity of the crime increases (Roberts & Stalans, 2004). For crimes that are particularly severe, experimental research suggests that combining retributive and restorative justice procedures may best satisfy the desire for justice (Gretem & Darley, 2006).

One final question can be raised about the overarching goals of restorative measures and whether they always serve the broader cause of social justice. Capelhart and Milavov原理 (2007) put it this way:

The glaring question is “Restored to what?” If, for example, the aim is a particular form of community organisations work, might the aim be to re-establish the “identity and self-development of the individuals” (Braithwaite & Braithwaite, 2001). By focusing on the shame-laden act rather than the individual who committed it, reintegrative shaming is thought to foster the formation of an alternative identity, which is itself linked to stigma. Which results from the attribution of shame and the important task of shame management. Nevertheless, there is evidence that such alternative identities, which are likely to be the result of self-reinforcement or the development of new identities is influenced by such factors as personal values and social norms. These values are influenced by restorative justice procedures (Ahmed & Braithwaite, 2006; Harris, 2006; Murphy & Harris, 2007; for conflicting views on shame and guilt, see Loth & Baumsteiger, 1998; Tangney, 1995).

The problem highlighted here is by no means limited to the study of restorative justice; it should serve as a reminder always to consider the “forest” as well as the “trees,” that is, the overall extent to which the social system that is being created or reinforced by the implementation of specific principles or mechanisms (allegedly) is the same as the system that is being reinforced by retributive, procedural, interactional, retributive, or restorative justice concerns) actually is worth reinforcing (see also Tyler & Jost, 2007).

OBLIGATIONS TO ATTAINING SOCIAL JUSTICE

There are numerous potential obstacles to the attainment of social justice, including both self-interest and laziness. There is also the tendency to dehumanize one’s enemies or to otherwise exclude them from the “scope of justice,” so that common standards of decency, fairness, and morality simply are not applied to certain groups or individuals (e.g., Clancy & Opotow, 2003; Denuch, 1985; Hafer & Otten, 2003; Opotow, 1995). In this section we focus on the ways in which authoritarism, social dominance, and system justification tendencies can threaten to undermine the cause of social justice.

Authoritarianism and Social Dominance

Adorno, Przybelski-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford (1950) identified a personality syndrome that they regarded as a threat not merely to social justice but to democracy itself (see also Reich, 1946/1970). Specifically, they proposed that econ- omy to the description and evaluation of social policies. In particular, social dynamics, lead certain individuals (a majority of individuals in some circumstances, such as Nazi Germany) to develop fascist (or proto-fascist) tendencies. The result was a population containing a disproportionate share of citi- zens gravitating toward rigid, stereotypical ways of thinking and extreme forms of prejudice and intolerance toward oth- ers, especially those who are considered deviants or conven- tional scapegoats. Subsequent research has shown that highly threatening circumstances elicit increased authoritarianism, especially in individuals who are prone to such responses (e.g., Bonanno & Jost, 2006; Brown, 1965; Davis & Silver, 2004; Doty, Peterson, & Winter, 1991; Feldman, 2003; Jost, Glaser, Knuttlanki, & Sulloway, 2003; Lavine, Lodge, & Freitas, 2005; Negler & Jost, 2008b, Steenber, 2008).
Perhaps the most succinct and compelling explanation for why social justice demands an inherent threat to the attainment of social justice comes from Walzer (1983), who observed that:

"The critique of domination and dominance points toward an open-ended distributive principle. No social good s should be distributed to men and women who possess some other good merely because they possess y and without regard to the meaning of x. This is a principle that has probably been reiterated, at one time or another, for every generation. It has not been stated.

In other words, it is unjust for individuals to disproportionately receive benefits or burdens simply because of some other (arbitrary, irrelevant) characteristic that they possess, such as belonging to a dominant or subordinated group. This is because, among other things, it violates basic notions of deserve, including need or (contribution) principle, as well as what Mansbridge (2005) referred to the "logic of formal justice"—the prescription to "Treat everyone equally unless you can give relevant reasons for unequal treatment" (p. 337; emphasis added). As Sidanis and Pratto (1999) point out, it is a regrettable if not inevitable fact of social systems that—at least in part because of their social group memberships—some individuals possess a "disproportionately large share of positive social value," including "such things as political authority and power, good and sufficient food, splendid homes, the best available health care, wealth, and high social status," whereas others "possess a disproportionately large share of negative social value," including such things as low power and social status, high-risk and low-status occupations, relatively poor health care, poor food, modest or miserable homes, and severe negative tensions (e.g., prison and death sentences) (pp. 31—32).

**System Justification: The Palliative Function of Ideology**

It would be difficult to find a more astute justice theorist or a bigger authority on ethical behavior in the entire history of Western civilization than Aristotle. And yet, there are aspects of his belief system that strike contemporary audiences as anomalous and obviously wrong-headed, possibly even immoral. Probably the most obvious example is his spirited defense of the institution of slavery as practiced by so many of his fellow Athenian citizens (see Krawt, 2002; Miller, 1995). It is not the case that no one in ancient Greece had ever raised moral objections about slavery; several philosophers of Aristotle's era had criticized the practice, but Aristotle apparently rejected those criticisms (Kraut, 2002, pp. 277-8). How could such a brilliant ethical mind possibly find itself arguing that such a brutal, exploitative institution as slavery was not only necessary but also just? The answer, it seems, has to do with system justification, defined as the conscious or unconscious motivation to defend, bolster, and justify existing social, economic, and political institutions and arrangements (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004). Kraut (2002) writes:

"No doubt, Aristotle believed that slavery was justified in part because that was a convenient tenet for him to hold. Had he come to the opposite conclusion, he would have been forced to announce to the Greco world that its political institutions, which he greatly valued (however much he also criticized them), rested on resources that could not be justly acquired or used. The all too human tendency to avoid spheres of thought and revolutions in social practice certainly played a role here. But, in order for Aristotle to have arrived at the sincere conviction that slavery was just, his social world had to present itself to him in a way that supported that thesis. (p. 279)

Thus, a combination of social, cognitive, and motivational factors apparently led Aristotle to the conclusion that some individuals are "natural slaves" (by virtue of their "childlike helplessness") and others are "natural masters" (by virtue of their "natural faculties"). Thus, he argued that both slaves and masters benefit from the institution of slavery. As a result of these beliefs, Aristotle and his fellow Athenians were able to feel better about their own society and to rationalize away any guilt, dishonesty, or negative affect that they might have otherwise felt. To put it even more broadly, because of Aristotle's philosophical stance, his arguments were resurrected in 16th-century Spain to justify the enslavement of indigenous people in the New World (Kraut, 2002, p. 277).

**Motivation to Justify the Social Status Quo**

If Aristotle himself was tempted to excuse the injustices inherent in the social system he knew and loved, what hope is there for the rest of us to avoid a similar fate, at least with respect to some subset of social issues? According to system justification theory, all of us are motivated—to varying degrees, as a function of both dispositional and situational factors (e.g., Jost & Hunnyard, 2002; Kay & Zanna, 2009)—to rationalize away the moral and other failures of our social, economic, and political institutions and to derogate and disparage alternative views, in comparison with our society, our government, our country, our community, and our world. This is also true for liberals and others (Jost, Nosek, & Gosling, 2008). The fact that political conservatives are motivated more strongly than liberals by system justification motivation helps to explain why: (a) they strongly favor advantaged over disadvantaged groups on implicit as well as explicit measures (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004); (b) their Black—White racial achievement gap is greater than for any other group, on average, over thirty years in the United States (Nosek, Banaji, & Jost, 2009); (c) they are more likely to deny problems associated with global climate change and to resist efforts to change current environmental practices (Peters, Gollwitzer, & Jost, in press); (d) they strongly believe in the existence of a "war on their average employee's dignity" (Stiglitz, 2004). It would be difficult to find any justice principle (i.e., equity, equality, need, etc.) that would "justificatively" this degree of economic inequality, and in fact the inequality has risen not because it was judged in advance to be fair but because of imper-"
motivation can lead us— it may have led Aristotle— to venture those features of the social system (e.g., customs, traditions, and practices) that should, on normative grounds, be changed. As Prasnera (1962) pointed out, all sorts of injustices may be enshrined in the rules of society, as those who settled this country knew and as many of those whose ancestors did not come willingly know even now" (pp. 8–9).

**From Theory to Practice: WHAT CAN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIAL JUSTICE?**

The topic of social justice brings into stark relief both the promise and challenges of social psychology in a way that perhaps no other subject matter covered in this Handbook does. Among other things, social justice is a theme that requires one to consider and integrate insights arising from individual, group, and system levels of analysis (Doise, 1968; Stange & Jost, 1997). Students of social justice— like those who dare to confront questions of rationality or truth— must grapple with the uneasy relationship between the subjective and the objective, or, as is nearly the same in this context, descriptive facts about how people actually think and act with respect to justice considerations and normative standards about how they ought to behave if their actions and institutions are to be considered just (see also Baron, 1995; Biber, 1992; Feinberg, 1979; Prasnera, 1982; Komor, 2003; Lerner, 2003; Miller, 1999; Payne & Cameron, in press; Sundel, 1986; Tyler & Jost, 2007; Walzer, 1983).

Of course, reasonable (as well as unreasonable) parties can disagree about what justice entails, and many longstanding, seemingly intractable conflicts, such as the Arab-Israeli conflict, or the US civil rights movement or intergroup disputes over what is considered fair and legitimate (e.g., Deutsch, 2006; Gibbons, 2008; Jost & Ross, 1999; Kelman, 2001; Leung & Stephan, 2000; Mikulka & Wenzel, 2000). At the same time, it is not entirely satisfying to conclude simply that justice is a matter of the truth or beauty in the "eye of the beholder." As Miller (1999) observed, "popular beliefs about social justice may turn out to be defective in various ways; for instance, they may prove to conceal deep contradictions, or involve serious factual errors" (p. 8). If we accept this possibility, then we cannot merely assume that justice consists solely of what people think is just (see also Sampson, 1983), even though it may be a difficult task to determine what actually is just (or unjust) in any given situation.

Another reason why one cannot simply interpret the subjective evidence of a given state of affairs as conclusive evidence of its objective fairness is that people sometimes tolerate circumstances, such as slavery, apartheid, or caste systems, that seem obviously unjust to outsiders, or in retrospect, or from the point of view of clearly established standards of just treatment (Cooper, 1987; Mill, 1855; Moore, 1978). Some such cases are said to reflect "false consciousness," defined as false beliefs that serve to sustain injustice or oppression (Fox, 1999; Jost, 1995; Lidd & Tyler, 1988). They may also suggest the presence of system justification motivation, that is, the desire to exonerate the existing social system and, in so doing, to minimize or override its injustices, whether petty or grand (see Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004; Jost et al., 2009; Kay et al., 2009).

For all of these reasons, the scholar of social justice must at least bear in mind the possibility that there are objective standards of justice, even if specific candidates are bound to be controversial (e.g., see Feinberg, 1973; Hur, 1981; Miller, 1999; Rawls, 1971). Much as researches use scientific means to identify the objective causes of subjective well-being (or happiness) of individuals (e.g., Kahneman, Diener, & Schwartz, 1999), it is possible to study social scientists to discover which characteristics of social systems are more or less to maximize equity, equality, need, liberty, respect, and other putative principles of social justice, and which characteristics lead disproportionately to unjust outcomes, such as suffering, exploitation, abuse, prejudice, and oppression. It seems like a daunting task to develop objective (as well as subjective) measures of well-being as an indicator of individual or societal level, but there is no way of knowing whether scientific methods can gain traction on age-old problems of social justice unless and until it is attempted.

Work by Jost (1999) suggests that it may be possible to draw meaningful comparisons among different societies with respect to their abilities to achieve standards of distributive justice. By extending this general approach to incorporate objective, quantifiable indicators of well-being (e.g., health, wealth, education, work satisfaction, and quality of life) in drawing comparisons among nations that prioritize different justice principles, empirical research could leverage utilitarian and other insights concerning social justice. Likewise, it may be feasible to compare societies in terms of how well they adhere to specific deontological principles; indeed, some human rights organizations collect international data to draw precise comparisons. The most compelling normative theory (or metaethory) of social justice will probably combine elements of utilitarian and deontological approaches and reconcile multiple, potentially conflicting justice principles— such as equity, equality, need, merit, liberty, consistency, accessibility, and so forth. It is true that these weights such principles differentially as a function of contextual variables, local contingencies, and domains of application. As John Stuart

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**Mill (1910) observed, “Not only have different nations and individuals different notions of justice, but, in the mind of one man, the same justice is not some one rule, principle, or maxims, but many, which do not always coincide in their dictates” (p. 51).**

Empirical research has a crucial role to play in clearing away common misconceptions— including erroneous assumptions, stereotypes, and misunderstandings about the causes of human behavior— and thereby updating and elevating public discourse about matters of social justice and morality (Greene, 2003; Payne & Cameron, in press). Over time, we have seen that scientific findings can change culturally prevalent representations of free will, consciousness, responsibility, and so on, and these changes slowly manifest themselves in legal and judicial transformations (e.g., Blasi & Jost, 2006; Greene & Cohen, 2004; Wegner, 2002). Cognitive scientists have contributed mightily to refining normative individual, rationality (e.g., Kahneman et al., 1982; March & Simon, 1958; Thaler, 1991) as well as formerly philosophical (and even metaphysical) treatments of epistemological questions in general (Goldman, 1992; Kornblith, 1999; Quine, 1959; Stich, 1990). In recent years, philosophers have incorporated evidence from social and personality psychology in evaluating Aristotelian and other normative (as well as descriptive) theories of ethics, virtue, and moral character (Appiah, 2008; Doris, 2002; Finanag, 1991; Harman, 1999; J. T. Jost & L. J. Jost, 2003). There is thus a pressing need to use psychological research will be less useful in forging the kinds of normative conceptions of justice and injustice that have traditionally been the bread and butter of moral philosophy and legal scholarship (see also Tyler & Jost, 2007).

Another basis for optimism concerning attempts to "naturalize" the study of social justice comes from explicit efforts to integrate legal studies with research in the social and behavioral sciences (e.g., Surowiecki, 2003), including calls for a "psychological jurisprudence" (Darley, Felson, Haney, & Tyler, 2002; Haney, 1993; Tyler & Jost, 2007) and "behavioral realism" (Blasi & Jost, 2006; Hanson & Yosifon, 2004; Kang, 2005; Krieger & Fiske, 2006). Each of these represents a concerted attempt to bring the law and public policy into better alignment with conclusions drawn from the scientific study of human nature. It has been suggested, for instance, that current legal protections against racial discrimination (e.g., the Davis doctrine) are inadequate because they focus exclusively on conscious intention as an explanation for human behavior and the basis for assigning legal responsibility, whereas contemporary social and cognitive psychology has demonstrated that automatic, implicit (i.e., unintentional) processes are capable of producing discriminatory outcomes (Greenfeld & Krieger, 2000; Kang & Banaji, 2006; Krieger, 1995; Lune, Kang, & Banaji, 2007; Lawrence, 2008, but see Mitchell & Tettlock, 2006 for a dissenting view).

All of this returns us to the grand Lewinian ambitions with which we began this chapter. The notion of solving social problems through rational, scientific means rather than ideological (or even coercive) means is particularly attractive (e.g., Adolph, 1959; Deutsch, 1998; Lerner, 1993; Martin, 2004; Mahnig, 2004; Mair, 1985; Walzer & Dwork, 2009). Along these lines, Kurt Lewin (1939/1948a) argued that the objectives of science and social justice were in fact highly compatible:

To believe in reason means to believe in democracy, because it grants to the reasoning partner a status of equality. It is therefore not an accident that not until the rise of democracy at the time of the American and French Revolutions did the goddess of reason "emerge" in modern society. And again, it is not an accident that the first act of modern Fascism in every country has been officially and efficaciously to exterminate this goddess and instead to make emotions and emotions the all-embracing principles in education and life from kindergarten to death.

Lewin argued that scientific sociology and social psychology based on an intimate combination of experiments and empirical theory can do much, or more, for human betterment as the natural sciences have done. However, the development of such a realistic, nonsocial science and the possibility of its fruitful application presuppose the existence of a society which believes in reason. (p. 83; emphasis added)

Thus, Lewin was enthusiastic—even heroic,” according to some (e.g., Ring, 1967)—about the use of social science to serve the ends of social justice and, in so doing, to improve society. The evidence we have reviewed in this chapter suggests that considerable progress toward this most ambitious goal has been achieved (e.g., see Benabou & Tirole, 2006; Deutsch, 1985, 2006; Freilich & Oppenheimer, 1992; Jost, 1999; Komor, 2003; Lerner, 1987; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Major, 1994; Mikulas & Wernar, 2000; Miller, 2001; Payne & Cameron, in press; Pettigrew et al., 2008; Rossi & Berk, 1997; Sklits & Tettlock, 1993; Thibaut & Walker, 1986; Tyler, 2006, 2007; Tyler & Jost, 2007; Van den Bos, 2005; Van Lange, 2000; Wielink et al., 2007). At the same